

Friday July 5 1996

Abu Dhabi D 8.50
Albania L 2.20
Andorra FF 165
Austria S 20
Bahamas B 2.50
Belgium BF 35
Bulgaria L 2.40
Canada C 1.20
Czech Republic KC 46
Denmark DK 15
Ecuador E 1.50
Egypt E 2.50
Finland FM 11
France F 6.50
Germany DM 3.20
Greece D 350
Hong Kong HK 2.50
Hungary H 200
Iceland IK 165
India IN 50
Israel IS 9.00
Italy I 3.000
Japan J 125
Kenya KSH 150
Korea KR 200
Latvia LV 2
Lithuania LT 200
Luxembourg LF 55
Malta M 1.50
Mexico MX 20
Morocco D 28
Netherlands G 4.00
Norway NK 15
Oman OR 1.00
Pakistan PK 100
Poland Z 5.00
Portugal P 200
Romania R 2.00
Saudi Arabia R 10
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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR 46,587

Printed in London, Manchester, Frankfurt and Roubaix

Sport 96

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Review

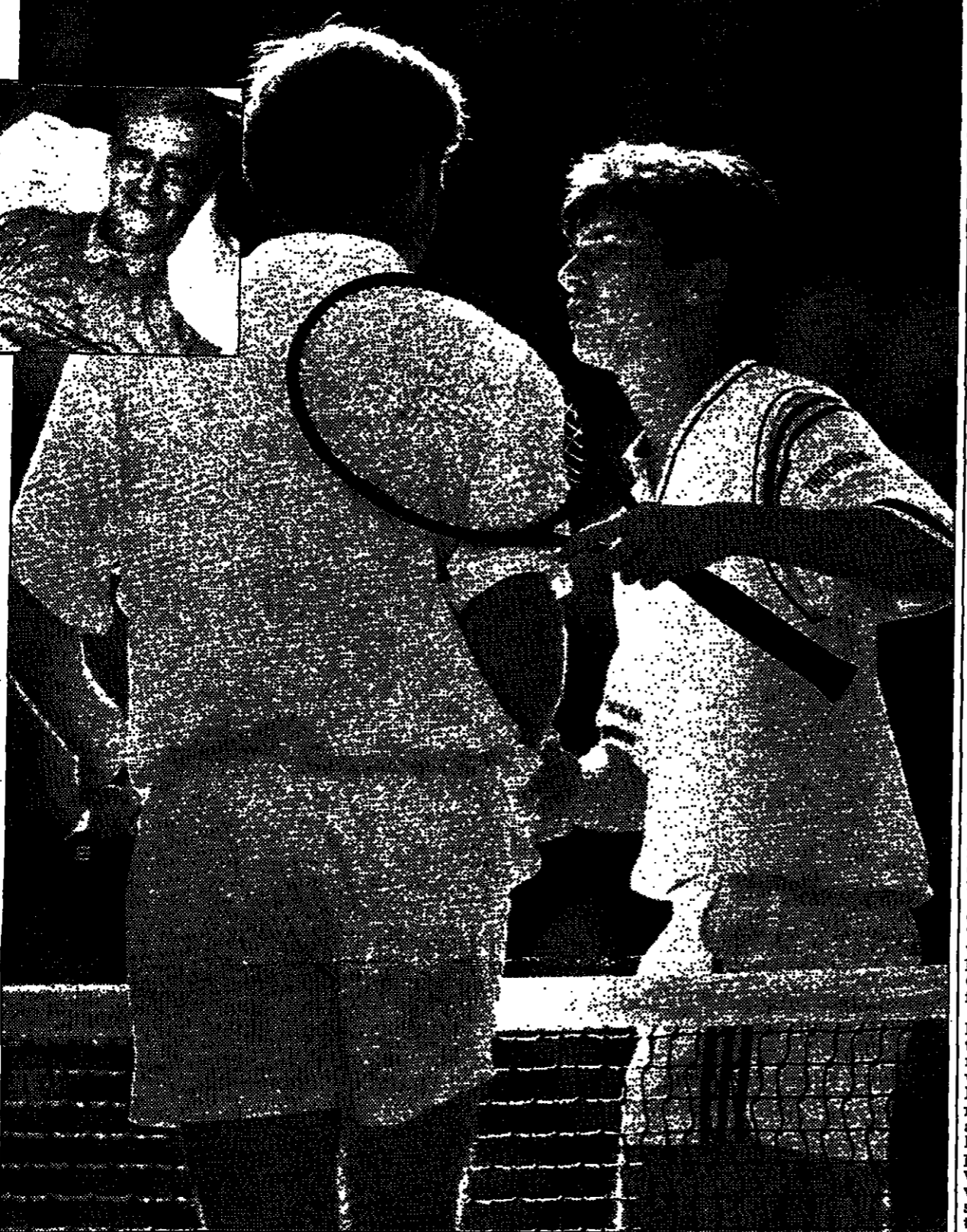
Michael Bennett, Paul Theroux



Grand old man of '38 nurtures wistful hopes that new star will lift 58-year burden

Frank Keating goes back 58 years to Wimbledon finalist Bunny Austin (right) who yesterday cheered on Tim Henman in the quarter-final. Austin's wish to be relieved of his 'burden' as the last Englishman to reach the final was, he feels, merely postponed by Henman's defeat by Todd Martin (above)

THE old man's soft-belled eyes glistened in anticipation in front of the television in his Surrey nursing home for the beginning on Wimbledon's Centre Court of Tim Henman's quarter-final match against Todd Martin of the United States yesterday.



undimmed when Henman went out 7-6, 7-6, 6-4 in rain-affected match of stops and starts. "Young Henman seems to me certain to win Wimbledon some time soon. He is remarkably impressive, such beautiful strokes, and an equable temper, and, crucially, he's learning that the bigger the point, then the better you have to play."

tin said he had been "desperately willing" young Henman at least to reach Sunday's final. "It's been a 'record' which has been round my neck for far too long."

As a losing quarter-finalist Henman will receive £21,025. For beating Austin in the 1938 final, the American superduper star Donald Budge received a voucher for £5 to be spent at the London jewellers Mappin & Webb, and Austin's prize was ditto for £2,105.

again. I have a standing-frame thing and can take one or two steps on it, so everything's coming along fine. Must say, young Henman's cheered me up no end these past few days. "Henman's play reminds me of my old French adversary René Lacoste — 'the Crocodile' — with his crafty play, his patience, and his killer-instinct when he knew he'd cornered you. He wasn't a power player, but had a very strong will and all the strokes."

Labour's pledges

Labour's five-pledge Road to the Manifesto last night unleashed a propaganda blitz between the major parties which pitted familiar Conservative allegations of extravagance against Labour counter-charges of reckless mendacity by the "Tory lie machine."

In a move calculated to kill off Labour's old "tax and spend" image, blind party supporters to his designated priorities for government, and win over wavering voters, Mr Blair promised a radical but responsible "contract for a new Britain" if he wins the election due within 10 months.

The Labour leader told a crowded press conference: "In government, this will be what we deliver — and deliver it without breaching Gordon Brown's 'strict rules for spending and borrowing'."

Within hours of the Labour leadership's official publication of its 10,000-word pre-manifesto statement — to be voted on by all 378,000 Labour Party members before Christmas — Tory HQ had unveiled a 1,000-site "New Labour, New Danger" poster campaign and John Major had warned that the new policies would mean higher taxes, despite Labour assurances to the contrary.

The sharpest skirmish involved the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, who picked one of Mr Blair's five symbolic priorities — to phase out the assisted places scheme and divert funds to cut class sizes to under 30 for 5- to 7-year-olds over three years — to prove that Labour had got its sums wrong.

"Squaring the circle is in fact impossible. This is Houdini economics, the politics of smoke and mirrors," said Mr Clarke, only to be confronted by Labour's new "rental unit" with figures from Mr Brown which accused the Chancellor of missing the crucial phasing of the policy.

The key battleground in the months ahead will, nonetheless, be taxation. Mr Brown's £3 billion windfall tax on the privatised utilities — to finance job creation for young and long-term unemployed —

Labour's pledges

- Cut class sizes for 5-7 year olds using cash from abolishing assisted places scheme.
• Fast-track punishment for persistent young offenders.
• Reduce NHS waiting lists by 100,000 patients using £100m saved from cutting bureaucracy.
• Take 250,000 under-25 year olds off benefit using cash from tax on privatised utilities.
• Tough rules for government spending, ensure low inflation, keep interest rates down.

is already under fire while some City and independent analysts do not believe Labour can deliver many of its declared objectives without raising taxes or borrowing. More Labour details will come after Mr Clarke's Budget.

In the presence of his shadow cabinet, Mr Blair insisted that past Labour heroes could all have signed up to principles underpinning the statement, even though it reflected changed policies for a changed world.

"Yes, there has been a revolution inside the Labour Party. We have rejected the worst of our past and rediscovered the best. And in rediscovering the best of our past, we have made ourselves fit to face the future and fit to govern in the future."

Mr Blair today goes on the road to start selling his policy statement to supporters and voters, some of whom fear that too many concessions — like last week's referendum

commitments on devolution — have been made to head off Tory attacks.

But after their disastrous mid-week propaganda initiative — an anti-Labour spoof called The Road To Ruin — Conservative strategists promised to harry him all the same.

Mr Major told MPs: "The new Labour Party's policies mean new taxes ... on Scotland, on people with children aged 16 to 18, taxes on jobs with the social chapter, and the minimum wage."

For the Liberal Democrats, Menzies Campbell cautiously declared: "There is no doubt that Mr Blair leads a different party from the one he inherited, but it's still not clear if he's able to lead the country."

The Conservative chairman, Brian Mawhinney, issued his own five-point claim that Mr Blair's five would bankrupt Britain, break up the Union, sell out Brussels, undermine hard-won competitiveness and hand out softer sentences to criminals. His staff rapidly issued a 14 page analysis of the Labour statement's weaknesses. Labour HQ countered instantly with a 40 page rebuttal.

In response to the prospect of millions of Labour cards, bearing the five pledges, the Tories issued similar red cards, repeating their own warnings.

The rival campaigns are expected to cost the Tories £2 million and Labour half that amount.

Sketch and review, page 2; Leader comment, page 8; City notebook, page 12

Charles offers '£15-£20m' divorce terms to Diana

Quick end to marriage likely after 10-week deadlock broken

Alex Bellos

THE Prince of Wales offered the Princess terms for divorce last night, breaking 10 weeks of bitter deadlock.

Diana's media adviser, Jane Atkinson, confirmed that her lawyers had received proposals from Charles's lawyers last night, but declined to comment further. Buckingham Palace refused to comment.

The offer opens the final

chapter of the couple's 15-year-old marriage. If Diana accepts the terms, Charles would be granted a decree nisi from the divorce courts on the grounds they have lived apart for more than two years.

A decree absolute, finally ending the marriage, would take a further six weeks. It is widely believed that the offer is for a clean-break settlement worth between £15 and £20 million, although the prince would have preferred this initially cheaper option of

giving his wife an annual allowance. The prince, though able to afford the payoff in the long term, does not have the liquidity necessary to make make it immediately and will need financial help from the Queen or may seek a multi-million-pound loan. His annual income of almost £5 million from the Duchy of Cornwall leaves him with about £1.5 million for personal expenses after deducting nearly £2.5 million in official expenditure and £1 million tax.

The prince cannot sell off any duchy assets as this wealth is, in effect, held in trust by him for future heirs to the throne. His personal

portfolio of stocks and shares, thought to be worth more than £2 million, would also not cover the cost. The princess, who celebrated her 36th birthday on Monday, is thought to be ready to move quickly, since in May she expressed her frustration to the Queen over delays.

The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh are thought to be keen for a swift end to the protracted divorce negotiations. In December, the Queen ordered the couple to divorce.

As part of the eventual divorce settlement, the princess is expected to continue living at Kensington Palace, although it is unlikely the prince will agree to her request to retain an office at St James's Palace, close to the prince's London apartment.

There is agreement between the prince and princess that access to their children, Prince William, 14, and 12-year-old Prince Harry, will be shared equally. Both Charles and Diana will continue to have a close involvement in their sons' upbringing.

There has been mounting speculation that the princess, as the mother of a future king, will, contrary to earlier reports, retain the style "Her Royal Highness". But this seems doubtful. It is more likely that she will be

addressed as "Diana, Princess of Wales". Agreement must also be concluded, involving 10 Downing Street and the Foreign Office, on the princess's future public role. She wants to be a "goodwill ambassador" for Britain, as well as a "Queen of Hearts" raising funds for charity and comforting the sick and needy.

The divorce settlement will include a "gagging clause" restraining the princess, and presumably the prince, from writing a "kiss-and-tell" book or going public in other ways. Diana was last night guest of honour at her friend Imran Khan's charity ball in London.

Inside

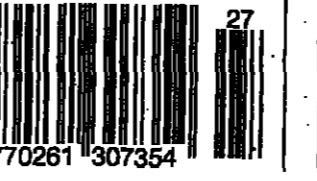
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Advertisement for American Express Travellers Cheques To Go. Includes a logo of a man in a uniform and the text 'GET YOUR AMERICAN EXPRESS TRAVELLERS CHEQUES To Go. AMERICAN EXPRESS TRAVELLERS CHEQUES ON THE SPOT AT LEYTONS BAY. Travellers Cheques Lloyds Bank'.

Launch of a document that 'makes you think of PEPs and private health insurance'



New Labour's pledge

Images from The Road to the Manifesto: 'Everyone is young healthy and white of skin - the kind of promotional literature of banks and insurance companies'



New Labour. New nouns. Real words. No verbs

Sketch



Simon Hoggart

LABOUR press conferences are run these days with the slick efficiency of a supermarket opening. First they play tapes - rock 'n' roll for people whose musical appreciation comes from elevators. Moving On Up. Things Can Only Get Better. upbeat songs which make you yearn to buy more extra-thick yoghurt.

they acted as a clique, cheering Mr Blair and jeering at questions which they didn't care for - a salutary experience for all the hawks. Mr Blair addressed us. It was a dazzling speech, designed to say simultaneously that New Labour was entirely different from Old Labour, and yet in some mysterious way linked statistically to Ancient Labour.

organisation which claims miserable poverty they have an awful lot of people working for them) even handed out cards listing all five instant pledges, labelled: "Keep this card and see that we keep our promises."

Review



Catherine Bennett

PLEDGE is not a word one often encounters except on the stacks of spray-on furniture cleaners, or maybe at an old fashioned pawnbroker's. Yet the Labour Party's new publication, New Labour, New Life for Britain, features five whole pledges.

personal account manager. Why should we trust him? Believe me, he seems to be saying, I want to help, just read the brochure. Yet the promotional literature of banks and insurance companies does, in the end, spell out what you will get in return for your investment. New Labour, New Life for Britain takes no such risks; it prefers the quasi-religious assertions of the Scout Promise: "On my honour, I promise to do my best, to do my duty to God and to the Queen, to help other people and to keep the Scout Law."

equally tortured subject, good but not best, essential but not compulsory. "Strengthening family life is essential to any decent concept of a civil society," we are told. On the other hand, "Ultimately government cannot rebuild family life. But government should not undermine it, when it could encourage it without being either intolerant or unrealistic. Come again? "Again, there is a programme of action here that is modern, radical and sensible."

Commons anger at jail cash crisis

Alan Travis Home Affairs Editor

MPS AND prison governors yesterday voiced strong protests over the Government's failure to acknowledge that it faces a price tag of up to £2 billion to bring Britain's jails up to recommended minimum security standards.

tary, Michael Howard, had not told the Commons what he intended to do about Learmont's prison security report despite a promise to tell MPs in the spring. "Where is that report, what will the recommendations of Learmont come to in total, and how many is Mr Howard going to accept?" he asked.

Woman wins top opera house job

Dan Glaister Arts Correspondent

THE Royal Opera House put an end to months of rumour yesterday when it announced that the Royal National Theatre's executive director Gemma McIntosh is to replace Sir Jeremy Isaacs as general director.

funded by £80 million of National Lottery money. More than 800 staff will lose their jobs when the opera house moves. Although two venues have been announced, there is still uncertainty about where the opera will perform.

Loser of '38 backs Henman to go all the way - one day

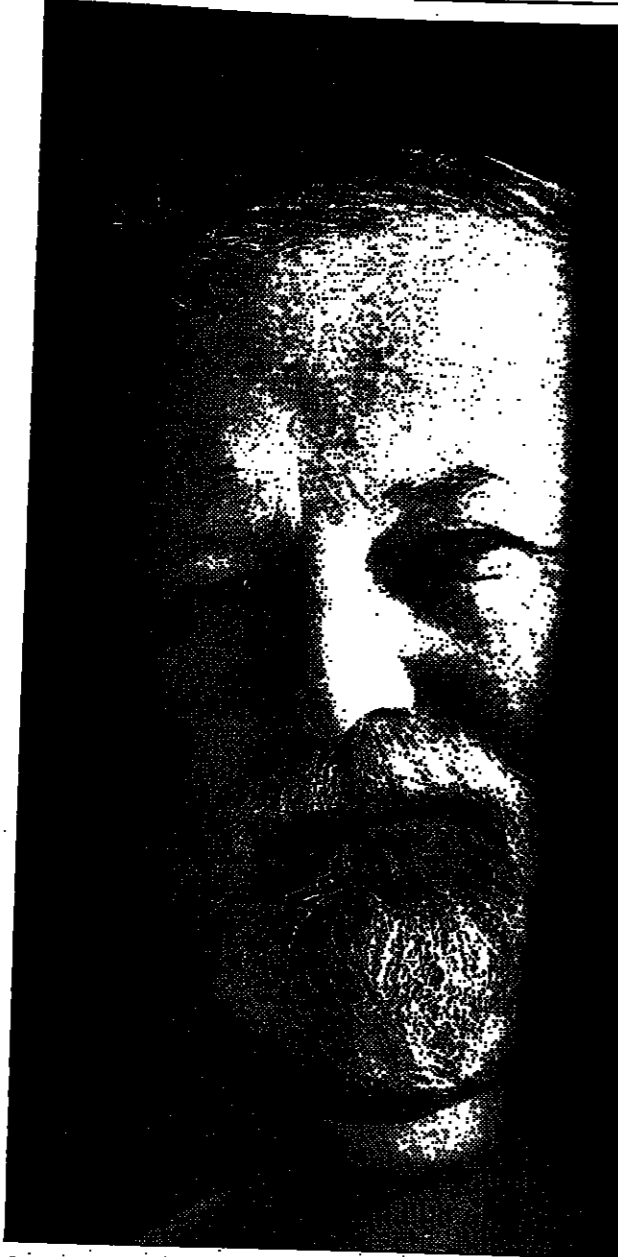
continued from page 1 played Daniel Penn in an epic decider, only to collapse in the fifth set and be carried from the court suffering from heat exhaustion and cramp. "It was convinced the mishap was due to the weight of my sweat-soaked long flannel trousers. At home I had my tailor run up some prototype white shorts modelled on what was then worn on the rugby field. Wimbledon might have been a touch miffed, but I'd introduced shorts to tennis and I think you can say they stayed there, what?"

just to be on the same court." In 1931, in the society wedding of the year, Austin had married the feted and beautiful actress Phyllis Konstam, whom he had met two years before when travelling by Cunard to the US Open at Forest Hills.

HEAL'S advertisement featuring a hat, a sun, and a man's face, with text: 'SUMMER SALE NOW ON' and 'BREATHLESS FEAR AND SUSPENSE'.

SCORPION TRAIL advertisement by Geoffrey Archer, featuring a scorpion and a man's face, with text: 'Breathless fear and suspense' and 'Out now in paperback'.

Handwritten Arabic text: 'سكنا من الاجل'



Canon Rex Davis: refused to leave

Lincoln dean and his deputy refuse to go despite pleas and damage caused by their clash

Madeleine Bunting and David Ward report



Dean Brandon Jackson: antagonism deepened after he faced charge of improper sexual conduct with vergers

Carey fails to end cathedral row



Lincoln Cathedral: life there damaged by 'mutual antipathy'

THE Archbishop of Canterbury gave an extraordinary display of his own impotence and frustration over an "irreconcilable personal conflict" between two senior clergy at Lincoln Cathedral yesterday.

Dr George Carey said he had requested both the Dean, the Very Reverend Brandon Jackson, and the subdean, Canon Rex Davis, to resign last month; the dean is "praying" about his position and Canon Davis has refused to leave.

Neither the archbishop nor the Bishop of Lincoln, the Right Reverend Robert Hardy, has the power to force the men to go — as cathedral clergy they are appointed by the Crown and no one can sack them unless a disciplinary offence is proven.

In an emotional statement at Lambeth Palace, the archbishop appealed to the men to leave for the good of the cathedral and the Church.

"They are unfortunately locked into a relationship of mutual antipathy which will continue to damage cathedral life for as long as they both hold office there," said Dr Carey, adding that both men failed to fulfil the basic requirement that a priest be a wholesome example to his flock.

At his home in Lincoln, Canon Davis said he had no plans to resign and would make a formal statement next week based on a letter he has written to the archbishop. The dean is on holiday.

The antagonism between the two men dates back to the arrival of Dean Jackson in 1988 but received widespread publicity last summer when the dean was exposed to a humiliating consistory court hearing on a charge of improper sexual conduct with a vergers.

After the charge was not proven, the dean complained to the media that some of his colleagues had been eager to take up the claims. Since then, the acrimony has intensified with a series of stormy chapter and staff meetings returning votes of no confidence in the dean. In February, 30 canons met in Lincoln and overwhelmingly approved a resolution asking Dr Carey to take decisive action.

The Bishop of Lincoln failed in his attempts to reconcile the two and threatened to resign last November; he called in the Archbishop of Canterbury to help.

Dr Carey admitted yesterday: "I run the risk of being ignored but I'm not empowered legally to do anything. I share the frustration of many people within and beyond the

Church at the fact that, under current circumstances, nobody has the power to resolve a problem causing such harm."

He said legislation due to come before General Synod shortly should ensure that a situation like Lincoln could not happen again.

The archbishop's decision to publicise the fact that the men had refused his request after personal interviews last month indicates a last-ditch effort to shame the men publicly into resigning.

Yesterday Bishop Hardy was fulfilling two engagements that had been in his diary for more than a year but found time to echo Lambeth's exasperation in a statement. "The effects of the current deadlock on the cathedral staff are deeply traumatic and they are both painful and disconcerting to many in the diocese," he said.

A card on the bookcase in his study at Bishop's House, Lincoln, put it in simpler more personal terms: "Lord grant me patience and I wait it NOW."

The bishop's personal assistant, Canon Raymond Rodger, was holding the fort in Lincoln. He said it was hoped the two men would listen to the moral authority of the archbishop. "I am deeply saddened that people of such seniority and with such a background of Christian service have reached a point whereby they are inhibiting themselves from finding a resolution," he said.

He found offensive the reported remarks of the dean that there was something intrinsically evil about the cathedral. "It has had worshippers in it for a thousand years. The place is steeped in prayer," he said. "There are a lot of godly lay people who worship here and do not recognise anything wrong within the fabric or the congregation and are deeply wounded and hurt by such suggestions."

Archbishop Carey said both men had been assured they would not suffer financial losses in their pension if they were to retire. The dean earns £20,000 and the subdean a little less. He also added that the two men, who are both in their early sixties, would be free to apply for new jobs in the Church of England.

Fight is on for Yeltsin spoils

David Hearst in Moscow

BEFORE the dust had settled on Boris Yeltsin's stunning defeat in the Russian presidential election, the deal-making and bitter infighting was under way last night as each faction in the president's entourage demanded a share of the spoils.

At issue is how far Mr Yeltsin goes down the path set up by his new nationalist backers and what place is left for the economic liberals.

Looking relieved at the end of a bruising campaign which ended in a week-long spell under medical supervision, Mr Yeltsin, aged 65, appeared on television to thank voters for their support and to appeal for unity. "Let us not divide the country into the victorious and the vanquished," he said.

With the final result all but officially declared, Mr Yeltsin had opened up a convincing 14 point lead, winning by nearly 54 per cent of the vote to Gennady Zyuganov's 40.4 per cent.

The first recipient of Mr Yeltsin's patronage — to the delight of Western backers — was the centrist prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, who was appointed to nominate the next government.

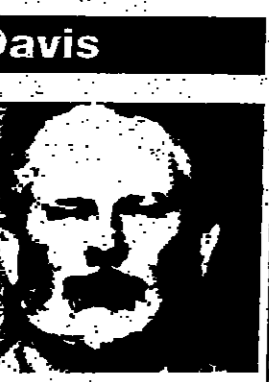
He immediately plunged the knife into General Alexander Lebed, who traded his first round vote of 11 million in return for a seat in the Yeltsin administration. Gen Lebed has demanded that the post of vice-president be created for him. "I don't plan to give anyone any part of my powers," Mr Chernomyrdin said.

Gen Lebed, Mr Yeltsin's new national security chief, said voters had given the president a huge loan of hope and confidence. "Now we must justify it. Otherwise the country will explode," he said.

Mr Zyuganov conceded defeat with the words: "This is a reality. Millions of citizens voted for Yeltsin and I have to respect the rules which obtain in all civilised societies."

Grigory Yavlinsky, the liberal economist who came fourth in the first round, said he was willing to work in a coalition government. Mr Chernomyrdin also spurned his offer.

Election report, page 6; Leader comment, page 6; The hammer and sick, page 9

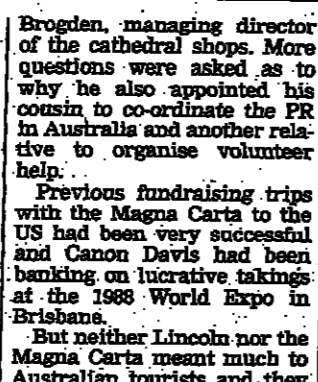


Down under streetfighter

CANON Rex Davis has kept a much lower profile than his rival. An Australian, he says he was brought up in the slums of Sydney and is a born streetfighter. Since 1977, he has been associated in Lincoln, no doubt bringing to bear those childhood skills.

His great claim to fame was his disastrous fundraising venture to Australia when he took Lincoln Cathedral's copy of the Magna Carta down under in June 1988. But instead of raising money, he lost a total of £56,000 on the six-month visit.

In addition, questions were raised as to why he had to take his wife, Caroline, his then 25-year-old daughter, Sarah, her friend Rachel Johnson, and his colleague Jo

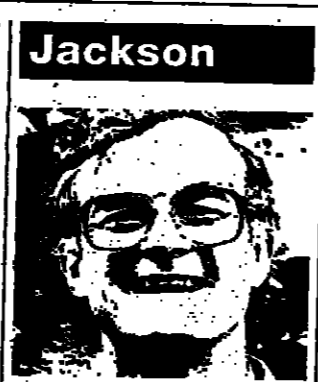


Working-class marathon man

THE Very Reverend Brandon Jackson has a taste for flord language and a vivid perception of the forces of good and evil in the world. After the case of sexual harassment against him was not proven last summer, he launched a visceral attack on the evil spiritual forces at work in the hallowed medieval cloisters of Lincoln Cathedral.

It was the sort of public pronouncement which provoked shivers of distaste and rolling of eyes among those Anglican faithful who prefer their Christianity a little more polite.

Lady Thatcher predicted that there would be "blood on the carpet" when she appointed Dean Jackson — but



not even she could have imagined how much blood would be there seven years after he arrived with a brief to 'sort out' Lincoln following a disastrous fundraising trip to Australia.

In his youth, Dean Jackson claims to have been a champion boxer. Now in his early sixties, he ran the London Marathon for the second time this year.

He is a blunt man, proud of his working-class origins, and had built up a reputation when Provost of Bradford of being energetic, evangelical and a bit of a muckler. In short, he was the sort of man to catch Lady Thatcher's eye. And, allegedly, it was her intervention which saw him transferred to the very different environs of Lincoln.

Dean Jackson's concern on arriving was that the cathedral had no sense of outreach or mission to the city. He saw it as preoccupied with its own liturgies and had no reluctance in using the media in his battle to reform. Such tactics alienated his staff, and earned him a reprimand from the Bishop of Lincoln.

The Dean has another ordeal ahead of him shortly. Verity Freestone, the vergers who claims he seduced her, is taking him to an industrial tribunal on a charge of sexual harassment next week. She claims sexual discrimination and unfair dismissal. — Madeleine Bunting

When the self pitiful Harvest became the major event of 1972, Young found himself lumped in with singer-songwriters like James Taylor, but where Taylor would continue to plough the same musical patch, Young was merely passing through.

Review cover story

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PEOPLES PHONE

السيد محمد

Hostage found handcuffed to radiator in north London house • Police in China arrest two men as ransom is paid

Chinese help Yard free kidnap victim

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

A CHINESE chef who was kidnapped 12 days ago and threatened with mutilation was yesterday found in north London handcuffed to a radiator. His wife, who is in mainland China, had to listen to his cries over the telephone as he was beaten by his kidnapers.

Police in this country and in China co-operated to secure his release. The senior investigating officer would not comment on suggestions that the man was the latest victim of a series of kidnappings by organised Chinese criminals.

Xiao Ming Cao, aged 25, who came to this country in January last year, was seized on Sunday, June 23. He was reported missing by members of the Chinese community the following day.

An investigation involving 50 officers from the Metropolitan police's specialist operations organised crime group

was launched. Two officers flew to China to liaise with their counterparts there.

The 19-year-old wife of the victim, Che Zhan, who comes from a farming family, was contacted by the kidnapers and had to listen to the screams of her husband as he was beaten up in London. The kidnapers threatened to cut off his fingers and an arm.

A demand was made for 500,000 yuan (\$40,000) to be paid in China by his wife's family. This was negotiated down to £12,000.

The victim was fed one small bowl of rice every two days. He received severe beatings and he feared for his life.

Yesterday morning the wife's family pretended to pay over the money in Fu Zhou, in China. As they did so, police arrested two men. The Chinese police immediately alerted their colleagues in London who raided a house where the man was found handcuffed to a radiator.

Officers showed Mr Xiao a note in Mandarin saying: "We are the police. Don't worry. Do as we say."

Five Chinese nationals were arrested at the scene. Three other Chinese nationals, all males, were arrested in further operations involving police in Bicester, Oxfordshire, and Dudley, West Midlands.

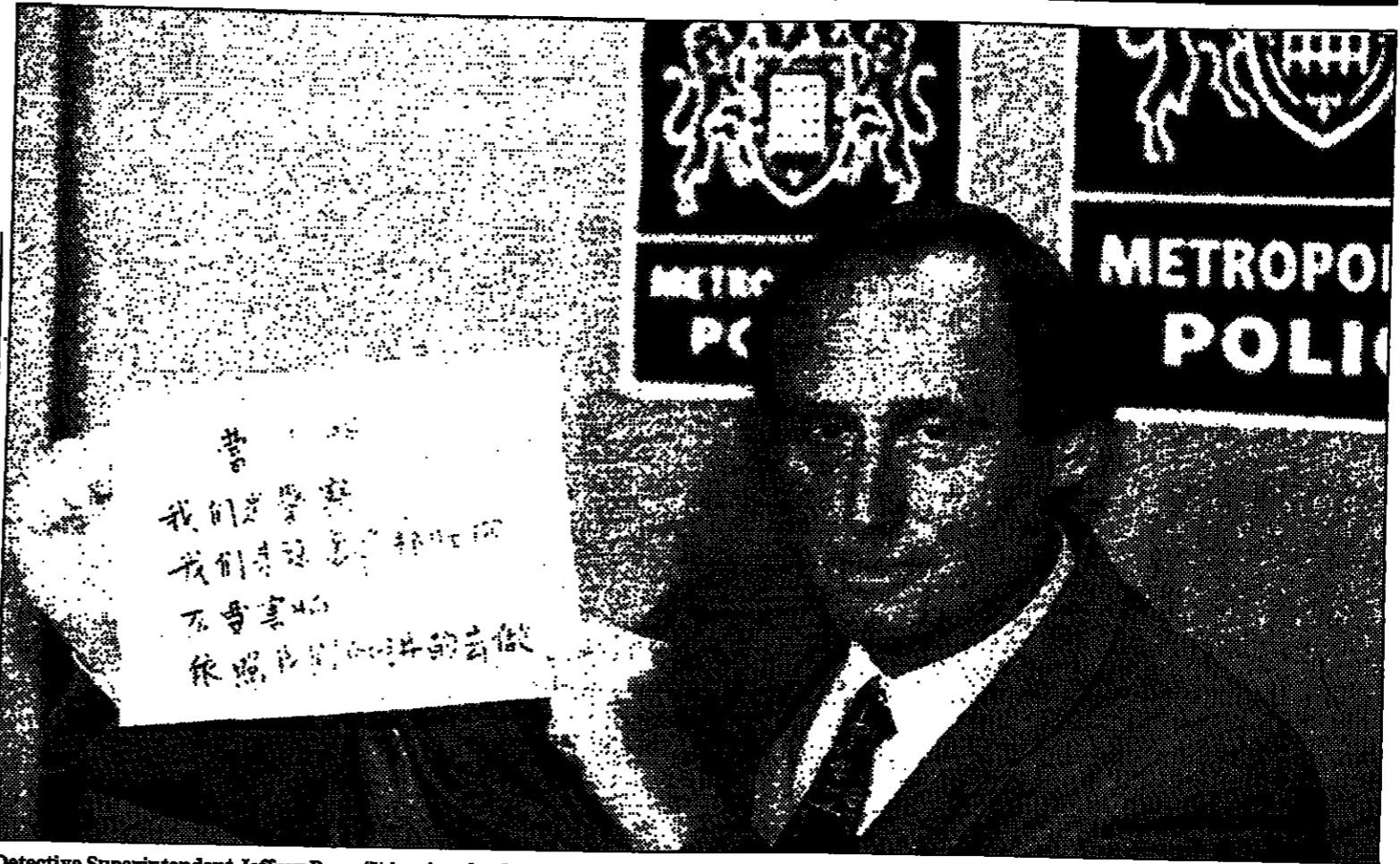
Mr Xiao was being treated in hospital last night for severe bruising and trauma.

Detective Superintendent Jeffrey Rees, who led the inquiry, said it had been especially difficult because of the time difference with China and the language problem.

"It has involved tremendous pressure because we knew one mistake could lead to the death of the hostage," said Mr Rees.

He said the gang had been skillful and determined. It was, as far as he knew, the first time such an operation involving Chinese and British police had been carried out. The officers were accompanied throughout the investigation by Mandarin-speaking translators.

There were 249 kidnappings in the Metropolitan police area last year.



Detective Superintendent Jeffrey Rees: 'It has involved tremendous pressure because we knew one mistake could lead to death' PHOTOGRAPH: SEAN SMITH



Xiao Ming Cao: Wife in China heard his cries over phone

Harmony guide offends Hindus

James Melke
Community Affairs Editor

EMBARRASSED council chiefs have scrapped a draft guide designed to promote understanding of ethnic communities' customs and religions after complaints that it was racist and encouraged Hindu fundamentalism.

Coventry council treasurer Peter Cordle yesterday admitted that the material devised for staff with the help of the council's equal opportunities unit had contained mistakes.

An estimated 2,000 Hindus live in the city but members of a group fighting "caste discrimination" said the "disturbing behaviour" of the Labour-controlled authority threatened human rights. The caste system is banned in India but remains pervasive.

One section in the guide referred to the five groupings of the caste system — from the highest to the "untouchables". It went on: "Caste is inherited by birth, one cannot change or leave one's caste system."

Hindus in Britain may wish to observe the caste system and wish to avoid dining or inter-marriage with members of other castes." But the system had been considerably relaxed among the younger generation.

Davinder Prasad, vice-president of the Action Committee for the Campaign Against Caste Discrimination complained: "Instead of portraying caste discrimination as an evil practice legally abolished in India in 1947, this draft document seems to glorify the worst form of racial discrimination."

Britain was devoting immense resources to eradicating discrimination and the city council had "deeply hurt the sentiments and feelings of our community."

Dilbagh Singh, chairman of the group, said: "We have lived in Coventry with pride and dignity for 40 years and have been proud to call ourselves citizens of this great city. We cannot comprehend why, after such a long stay, the council feels the need to publish this offensive Hindu fundamentalist literature."

Railway line bans school's pupils after they 'run riot'

Lucy Manning

PUPILS have been banned from travelling to a secondary school by train after they were accused of vandalising carriages and abusing staff and passengers.

All 800 pupils at Mount Grace School, Fotheringhay, Northamptonshire, have been told they may only travel on the West Anglia Northern Line from next week if they are accompanied by a teacher or parent.

Peter Wilkinson, commercial director of the line, claimed Mount Grace pupils had damaged trains, thrown cigarettes at passengers and abused staff. "In the last two to three years they have done considerable damage, and there have been verbal and physical assaults. As a company we have now had to say enough is enough."

However, the school criticised the decision and said the trouble had been caused by just two pupils.

The school's headmaster, Christopher Elliott, said: "About 150-200 pupils use the trains and, although some are boisterous, the vast majority

are perfectly reasonably behaved."

West Anglia's decision followed an incident on Wednesday night. Stuart Hall, head of retail and customer services for the company, was travelling on the train. He said: "The pupils were extremely unruly. They intimidated passengers on the platform, showed them as they got on the train, and walked through the carriage verbally abusing passengers. They then entered a first class compartment and tore off the headrests and seat covers."

A police spokesman said that, following Wednesday's incident, "two pupils were verbally cautioned in front of their headmaster, and the matter is now closed as far as everyone is concerned."

The company hopes the school and parents will become more involved in transport arrangements. "The message must get across that parents need to keep their children under control."

However, Mr Elliott said there was no possibility of teachers acting as chaperons for pupils on the trains. "It is not necessary, and is not in a teacher's contract."



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After the election the real power struggle will begin - as the Communist-nationalist alliance faces disintegration

Lebed afraid of missing out on glory

'Russia has chosen the right course. But a bill has been drawn on people's expectations, and it must now be redeemed'

James Meek in Moscow

THE MAN who did more than any campaigner to deliver Boris Yeltsin his critical margin of victory stood on the sidelines awaiting his reward yesterday as his potential rivals in the corridors of power talked coolly of his future role. After a frantic fortnight of press conferences and interviews in which Alexander Lebed spoke volubly about his future role controlling a huge range of government activities, from crime-fighting to economic reform, the former general seemed to have been forgotten by the triumphant Yeltsin camp.



Drink to victory... A soft-drink ad is pasted over an election poster showing President Yeltsin and Yuri Luzhkov, mayor of Moscow, yesterday

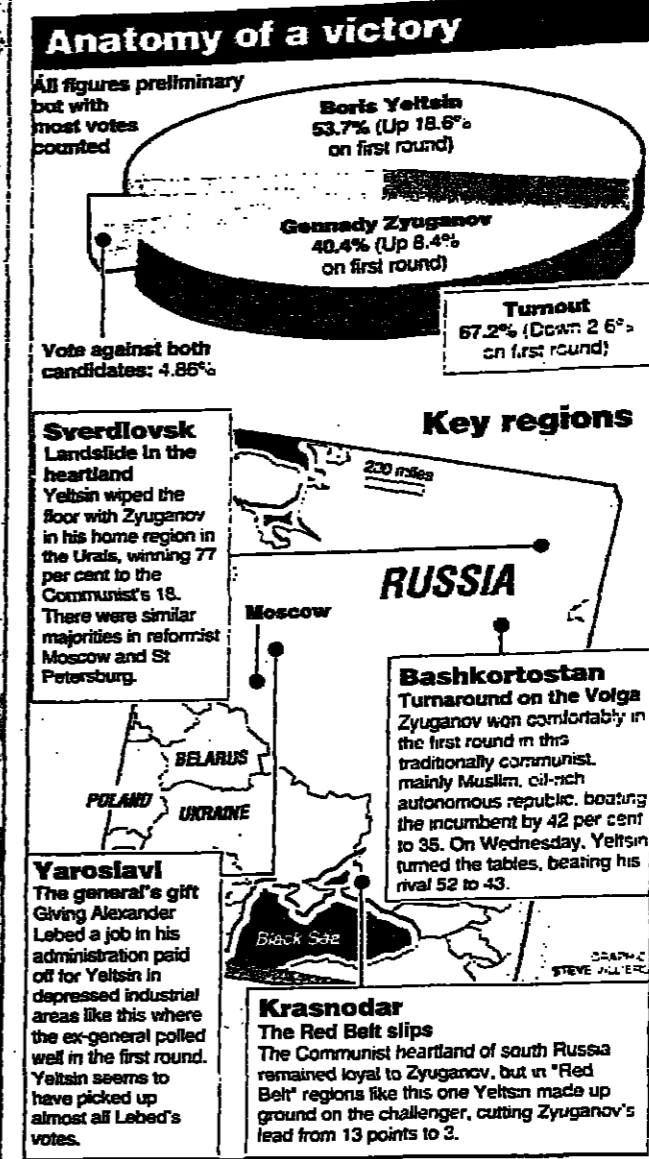
his support in the run-off. The general seemed to be extracting a stiff price from the president, when the defence minister, Pavel Grachev, was sacked along with other hardliners and Mr Yeltsin had to incorporate much of the Lebed programme into his own.

When Mr Yeltsin fell ill last week, Gen Lebed stepped in as a campaign figurehead, suggesting he fill a recreated vice-president's post, savaging the country's powerful oil and gas lobby - personified by the prime minister, Victor Chernomyrdin - and speaking out

on fiscal policy. He has already said he expects Mr Yeltsin to sign a decree turning the security council into a powerful executive body. But with victory comfortably in the bag yesterday, questions about the general's future were answered with evasion and hostility by Mr Chernomyrdin and Mr Yeltsin's chief aide, Viktor Ilyushin.

The prime minister, who would become acting head of state if Mr Yeltsin was incapacitated or died, dismissed the idea of reviving the vice-presidency, pointing out it would show a change to the constitution. "I don't see any special need for this," he said. "I never have delegated any of my powers to anyone, and I won't do that. As for security and order, there will be plenty of work for everyone."

Although Gen Lebed's rump campaign team were claiming yesterday that he had delivered 10 million votes to Mr Yeltsin in the second round - roughly equal to the president's margin of victory - the scale of Mr Yeltsin's success might tempt him to belittle the general's role. Gen Lebed is unlikely to stay quiet if he receives such treatment. In his memoirs, I Feel My Country's Shame, he recalls how he was fêted as a hero after his part in defeating the 1991 coup and the rage he felt at being manipulated.



General won battle of ballots

James Meek in Moscow

BETWEEN the first and second round of Russia's presidential election, the incumbent Boris Yeltsin increased his vote by almost 19 percentage points. The Communist-nationalist challenger, Gennady Zyuganov, boosted his share by a little over eight.

Mr Yeltsin's decisive move was giving General Alexander Lebed, who polled third in the first round, a powerful position in the administration, enabling the president to snap up the votes of his law and order-loving supporters.

The Lebed factor showed up particularly clearly in regions like Ivanovo and Yaroslavl, depressed industrial areas north of Moscow, where Mr Zyuganov fared poorly in the first round and Gen Lebed and Mr Yeltsin carved up the vote between them.

In Yaroslavl, preliminary second round results showed Mr Yeltsin polling 61 per cent - practically his and Gen Lebed's first round vote combined - against a rise of 13 points for Mr Zyuganov, to 31 per cent.

The Lebed vote also seems to be partly responsible for the Communists stalling in their heartland, the "Red Belt" regions of southern Russia. In Tambov, where the county hall still flies a red flag, Mr Zyuganov peaked at 60 per cent, seven points up on June. Mr Yeltsin polled 35 per cent - but his share of the vote rose by 14 points.

As before, Mr Yeltsin picked up millions of votes in urban areas like Moscow and St Petersburg - where market reforms have brought benefits - and in his home region of Sverdlovsk.

Mr Zyuganov continued to have the edge in parts of Siberia. But the failure of his brand of USSR-nostalgic nationalism to take root in the Far East showed its weakness compared to the "Great Russia" nationalism of Gen Lebed, Mr Yeltsin and Vladimir Zhirinovskiy.

Broadly, the north-south, rural-urban split seen in the first round was maintained. The agricultural south and the mining north, as a whole, together with areas dominated by the arms industry, voted for Mr Zyuganov. There people find it hardest to survive in a market economy.

The big cities, with their more diversified industries, the resource-rich north and the more trade-orientated European regions in the Moscow-St Petersburg-Nizhny Novgorod triangle, feared the upheaval of a change of power would bring, and are benefiting from the new freedoms.

There were some startling pro-Yeltsin anomalies in the Red Belt, suggesting either the powerful personal influence of local bosses in ethnically-based regions or fraud. The most suspicious result was in the North Caucasian republic of Dagestan, long a bastion of Communist support. In June, Mr Zyuganov won 66 per cent of the vote, against 26 per cent for Mr Yeltsin, with Gen Lebed barely registering. This week, Mr Yeltsin's vote shot up to 51 per cent, with Mr Zyuganov down to 46.

Almost as dubious was the result in the oil-rich Volga republic of Bashkortostan, where a largely Muslim population traditionally backs the Communists. How a Zyuganov lead of 42 to 35 per cent in June turned into a Yeltsin triumph of 52 to 43 per cent this week is a mystery.

Defeated communists face fight to survive

The party risks tearing itself apart and ending up as a minority group for those on the extreme left. David Hearst reports

THE locomotive that bore Lenin's body from his country retreat in Gorky no longer stands in splendid isolation in the huge hall of Pavlovsk Station. The hall has become a showroom for expensive foreign cars. Lenin's outstretched finger cannot dictate the party line in central squares in hundreds of provincial cities, where his statue still stands.

Such symbols are visibly retreating from the face of Russia. Is the party finally over for those who grew up in the belief that they were building world communism? A smiling, self-confident Gennady Zyuganov last night dismissed any notion that his defeated party would never make a comeback. "Defeat? You mean a party which got in 1993 7 million votes, in 1995 15 million votes, in the first

round of elections this year 24 million votes and yesterday nearly 30 million votes, you call this a defeated party? No. This is a force which any serious politician will have to take seriously," he said.

Mr Zyuganov polled those votes as head of an opposition coalition made up of nationalists and communists. His own Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF) is a shaky alliance of social democrats who have all but abandoned their communist faith, nationalists who believe in the restoration of Russia as a "great power", those who are nostalgic for the certainties of the Soviet Union, and extreme left-wingers who believe in the old dogmas.

Even the next three months, when they have to pay out all their promises, the unpaid salaries, grants for students and pensions."

The danger for the communists is that if Mr Yeltsin strikes the right balance with his new government, the strains within the Communist Party will start to tear it apart. In the long-term, the social democrats will want

to branch out on their own, since no party currently occupies the centre ground. The KPRF is far removed from the post-communist parties of Poland and the rest of Eastern Europe, whose leaders are busy acquiring vast personal fortunes.

Alexei Podberioskin, leader of Spiritual Heritage and Mr Zyuganov's right-hand man in the election campaign, is one such figure who does not consider himself a communist, but a patriot. Bankers are not his ideological opponents but his colleagues.

Take a rest, pleads Naina

Reuters in Moscow

BORIS YELTSIN'S wife had sat up nervously waiting for the election results and that she wished he would now take a rest.

"He's not a superman, he's a man like everyone else," Russia's first lady, aged 64, told NTV commercial television. Naina admitted earlier this year that she was worried about Mr Yeltsin running for a second term because of heart problems he suffered last year. But she reacted sharply to the interviewer's suggestion that Mr Yeltsin's disappearance from the public eye in the run-up to the second round was a cause for concern.

News in brief

- Release Kashmir captives, Western countries demand**
THE United States, Britain, Germany and Norway yesterday demanded the immediate and unconditional release of four tourists held captive in Kashmir for the past year, writes Richard Norton-Taylor.
- Tamil bomber kills 21 others**
A Tamil rebel suicide-bomber with explosives strapped to her body threw herself in front of a government motorcade in Jaffna yesterday, killing at least 21 others, a military official said.
- Glamour of crime**
Sandra Ziliola, aged 24, accused of robbing six banks at gunpoint and dubbed "Sharon Stone" for her good looks, fair hair and tight outfits, was arrested in Campinas, south-eastern Brazil, police said. - Reuter.
- Arctic trick**
Tourists who have taken pictures of themselves crossing the Arctic Circle may have to come back and take them over again. The Oslo newspaper Verdens Gang revealed that the Arctic Circle has moved and is now 918 yards north of where they all thought it was. - AP.
- Smokers barred**
The right to drink in a smoke-filled bar in Toronto will come to an end with a local anti-smoking law, one of the toughest in America, making bars, restaurants and entertainment facilities smoke free by January 1. - Reuter.
- Minestrone design**
The smell of minestrone began spreading through the Pompidou Centre yesterday, as part of an exhibition of Gaetano Pese's work, writes Alex Duval Smith in Paris. The smell, which will linger until October 7, is said to illustrate the Italian designer's view that the world is a minestrone - a mixture of many things.
- Inmates stitch lips in protest**
ELEVEN inmates in a Salvadoran prison have sewn up their mouths to show they are not eating, relatives said this week. They are among 180 prisoners refusing food to protest against overcrowding in the Santa Ana prison, 40 miles east of San Salvador. As part of their protest, the inmates are also threatening to execute four comrades who were selected for death in a lottery at the prison last month. The executions are due to go ahead on July 12. The 11 showed their lips together "to show that they really are on a hunger strike", a relative said. Inmates want more prisons to be built and fewer people to be jailed for long periods pending decisions on whether to convict them. The prison, which has a population of 765, has a capacity for 350. - Reuter.

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Israeli leader hit by scandal before US visit

Shyam Bhatia in Jerusalem

ISRAEL'S prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, is facing a host of embarrassments as he prepares for what his backers hoped would be a high-profile visit to the United States next week.

Mr Netanyahu's spokesman, Shai Bazak, insisted yesterday that the prime minister has nothing to hide, after opposition MPs demanded to know why the leader appears to have used four different names while living and studying in the US.

According to the Israeli newspaper, Kol Ha'Ir, Israel's future leader was shown on a US government file as Benjamin Netanyahu. Benjamin Netai, John Sullivan and John Sullivan Jr.

His Social Security number — the key identification for any resident's dealings with the government on tax and other financial matters — was shared with two real Sullivans, who are US citizens.

The suggestion is that Mr Netanyahu used the aliases to prolong his stay in America. But his Labour party opponents find it suspect that the file unmarked by the newspaper was marked Secret, leading to suggestions that the Israeli leader may have worked for the CIA.

This is not the preface that Mr Netanyahu's advisers were trying to cultivate for him as they seek to create the image of a kosher Camelot. He had promised a Kennedy-style administration brimming with ideas and policy initiatives.

With this week's scandal of his wife throwing out her South African nanny, and reports of his senior cabinet colleagues bossing him around about who should be

in his administration, Mr Netanyahu's leadership is looking ragged after 10 days in office.

Today, Mr Netanyahu will ask the cabinet to create a "ministry of infrastructure" to oversee Ariel Sharon into his government. The prime minister's deputy, David Levy, threatened to resign unless the general was included.

Mr Netanyahu is also being criticised for creating in the image of the White House his own national security authority, his own chief of staff and an economics advisory team which — it is feared — will subvert the normal work of cabinet.

Many Israelis are starting to ask, is the best amid the soundbites and the pictures of him, his wife Sara and their two young sons. He is coming under increasing pressure, even from within his own party, to say exactly where he stands on the peace process.

Meanwhile, US officials charged with arranging the Netanyahu family visit have reportedly discovered they are required to organise amusements for the Netanyahu offspring, including a trip to the Nasa space centre.

What chills the blood of some Israelis is that Sara — a former air hostess turned child psychologist who is being given her own office next to the prime minister — may get tips about how to behave like a first lady from Hillary Clinton.

Mr Netanyahu, yesterday accused the Palestine Liberation Organisation of failing to meet its obligation to revoke calls for Israel's destruction from its charter.

The Palestinians retorted that Israel was the one violating signed agreements between them.

Jonathan Freedland in Arlington sees Independence Day come early for 68 new US citizens

From ethnic fruit salad to American pie

IT IS hard to sing with a lump in your throat, but somehow they managed it. Their right hand over their heart, their English broken, they sang out the anthem of their new country. "Oh, say, can you see, by the dawn's early light," all the way to the most rousing of climaxes — "The land of the free, and the home of the brave."

The 68 men and women crammed into the ceremony room of the United States Immigration and Naturalisation Service's Arlington branch, had waited for this moment for years. Today they would become US citizens.

The faces were as diverse as the country they were joining: an old Vietnamese man, a young Dutch blonde, a black Muslim woman, a Scottish house-

wife — every one a new American.

Each day at 4pm the same ritual takes place in this room and in rooms like it all across America — naturalising 1.2 million immigrants last year alone. Business was booming this week in the run-up to the Fourth of July celebrations.

They were ushered into Room 507 by a clerk calling out "Welcome, new citizen!" like a real-life Lady Liberty. There were so many that accompanying spouses had to be kept out, filling the corridor outside. But one man squeezed through to take a picture of the Albanian boy, aged six, his daughter had adopted. The beaming grandfather presented the child with a balloon, marked with stars and stripes.

An official took the register, which sounded like a roll-call at the United Nations. An Abdulah and a Fernando, a Murphy and a Kim. He checked that they had all gone through the requisite interview, where

The new citizens had swooned up on all this in advance, thanks to a government manual explaining the basics of American civics, history and culture — including pictures of the Liberty Bell and the Lin-

coln Memorial, and little quizzes to test their knowledge. They were told to put all that democratic learning to good use and register to vote.

But now it was time to say the magic spells that would transform this ethnic fruit salad into Americans. The district director, William Carroll — a second-generation American, half-Irish, half-Italian — delivered a surprisingly touching speech.

"This is a wonderful day," he said. "Really a new birthday, a re-birthday to a new homeland." America would offer them freedom they could not find anywhere else, he said, and people like them had made the country great.

He recalled his grandfather who used to say: "I could have gone to Spain but I could never have become Spanish; I could have gone to England but I could never have become an Englishman." But, Mr Carroll continued, "the truly became an American in the 1890s, as you will truly become an American today."

The 68 stood and recited the oath of allegiance, renouncing previous loyalty to "any foreign prince, potentate, state or sovereignty". They said the pledge of allegiance to the flag, were each handed their certificates of naturalisation, and wished a wonderful Fourth of July.

Janice Green from Doncaster said she felt more emotional than she had expected — that she now realised it was "goodbye England". Brigitte D'Antonio from Holland was happy that she was now part of the "best country" in the world. Fatjon, the Albanian, played with his balloon.

As they left, Mr Carroll's words hung in the air: "It's hard to believe," he had said, "that you are American." For these new Americans, it was their very own Independence Day.



Militant cabbies... Protesters march during a strike by more than 120,000 taxi drivers in Bombay yesterday against the transport authority's refusal to allow fare increases in line with a rise in petrol prices PHOTOGRAPH: SHERWIN CHAPRAO

Drug runners find El Dorado in Orinoco delta

One man and his broken boat must patrol Venezuela's cocaine highway, John Wade in Tucupita reports

WHEN Columbus stumbled upon the intricate maze of channels, creeks and islets that make up the Orinoco delta he thought he had discovered a paradise on earth.

"Today, it's a drug traffickers' paradise," Johan Obdola, the director of the regional office of Venezuela's national anti-drug commission, says bluntly.

Tucked away in the eastern extremes of Venezuela where the Orinoco River fans out into the Atlantic Ocean, Tucupita, the capital of Delta Amacuro state, is a sleepy place.

About 70,000 of the state's 104,000 inhabitants live in the capital. Warao Indians, who make up most of the rest, are scattered in isolated settlements across the delta's vast expanse of wetlands. Just beyond Tucupita, the roads end.

Some 500 years ago the labyrinthine delta drove Sir Walter Raleigh to delirium in his abortive search for the gold of El Dorado.

These days, where the freshwater dolphins, exotic vegetation and silt dwellings of the Warao begin so does a thriving drug-trafficking route to the US and European cocaine markets, says Mr Obdola.

He estimates that about 15 tons of cocaine a year is smuggled in launches through the delta's 3,000 channels, which open into some 250 outlets to the sea.

There is little effort at prevention and even less evidence of how much cocaine is getting through. Last year, 6.2 tons of cocaine was seized in Venezuela, yet officials acknowledge this is probably a fraction of the real problem.

According to Mr Obdola, the cocaine travels from Colombia by air, land and water across Venezuela and Brazil to strategic distribution points close to the delta. From there, the drugs are ferried through the delta to nearby Trinidad and north and neighbouring Guyana to the east.

"It's a perfect exit route," he says. "The traffickers are highly organised, they're always one step ahead and there's a no government action plan."

He complains of his paltry annual budget of about \$14,000. His phone line has been cut off because of an unpaid bill and, in a state that is 60 per cent water, his only launch needs repairing. The craft used by the local police and national guard are also regularly out of action.

Tucupita's residents are equally keen to expose the "narco" boom over the past 10 years. The main morning news item on local radio reports a case in which 1.7kg of cocaine "disappeared" from a Tucupita courtroom.



been enlisted by the drug traffickers as guides, mules and store drugs.

"They collaborate more with the narco than they do with us. In return, they give them food, money and rum."

Some locals have become rich overnight. He cites the case of a cinema doorman who flaunts a new-found wealth. There are also the members of a Tucupita family who gave up labouring jobs to buy a cattle ranch near the delta. At recent confidential reports details their phone bills last year running at more than \$3,000 a month, with frequent calls to Colombia and the US.

Mr Obdola worries about the quantity of drugs that slip through and his problems following up intelligence leads. An investigation that uncovered but failed to stop a 3,000kg shipment led to members of Venezuela's military and political elite, he says.

Father Xelir Nino, a priest for 23 years at a Capuchin mission in a remote Warao community eight hours by boat from Tucupita, is concerned about the drug trade's impact on the Indians.

"The Indians are very patriotic, but when they drink they get violent. If they're like that with rum, they'll be finished if they start consuming cocaine."

Saudis on royal road to ruin



Other worlds

Leslie Plommer

SAUDI ARABIA has been on a quest for security ever since it became a unified state 64 years ago. Yet its rulers have been missing the obvious: they have searched far, but not near enough; they have searched high, but not low enough.

The lorry bomb that killed 19 United States military personnel at King Abdul Aziz Air Base near Dhahran last week was the sort of wake-up call that might rouse a government to reassess the meaning of real security. In the Arab world, the opposite is likely.

Hence the humming of phone lines between Riyadh and Washington, and the activation of at least 70 FBI agents and many more Saudi officers to investigate the bombing.

And always, in the background, the whirring of Saudi intelligence agencies' computers, searching out the usual suspects.

All this activity will almost certainly lead to arrests. It may even lead to the arrests of the guilty men. Although international opinion is likely to remain sceptical of any confessions unless the FBI takes part in the interrogations — a role refused them in the case of the four executed on May 31 for last November's bombing of a US-run military training centre in Riyadh.

However, the US says it has won permission — denied after the November attack — to push back the perimeter fence to at least 400m from the outer buildings at the Dhahran military housing complex, where roughly half of the 5,000 American troops deployed in Saudi Arabia are stationed.

Washington and Riyadh have offered between them \$3.3 million in reward money for information leading to the capture and conviction of the bombers.

Fences, rewards, computers, forensic teams and roadblocks: the Riyadh government and its American ally are throwing all the resources they have at a criminal case where success can only yield a new crop of executed martyrs to be avenged by a new squad of bombers.

Security, in short, lies anywhere but in the security apparatus where the two countries are concentrating their efforts. Even so, there appears to be no change in the kingdom's historical policy of seeking safety afar in foreign garrison armies and foreign weapons, and at home in the maintenance of an extensive security apparatus under the direction of a tiny elite.

Saudi calculations have forgotten where the security of a country actually lies — in the hearts and allegiance of ordinary people.

In a country where the ruling family is the central political institution, with a near-monopolistic hand on power and wealth, most citizens remain spectators, apparently deemed unfit for a fully adult role.

It is this suppression of civic life which produces the situation in which Saudi Arabia now finds itself, where politics, in the words of the writer Fouad Ajami, "has been driven into the mosque".

After the Dhahran blast the Saudi defence minister, Prince Sultan bin Abd Aziz Saud, declared: "The kingdom is not influenced by threats."

Why not? The presumed message of the bombers — that foreign armies are unwelcome and that the House of Saud needs reform — has support throughout Saudi society, even among the majority who wish the ruling family to remain in some form.

The country's pale ghost of a consultative assembly — appointed by King Fahd after decades of broken promises by his predecessors — is filled with worthy men but remains more an example of rule by an elite than a vehicle for popular participation.

That the public cannot visit the assembly to hear its debates and the press cannot attend to report them are indicators of how remote from the people this elite institution is.

Even neighbouring Kuwait has had to shelve a plan to broadcast the proceedings of its more robust elected parliament because the Saudi rulers deem this would be too dangerous.

And there the conundrum lies: so long as public debate and participation are equated with subversion, all the king's money and all Washington's men cannot secure Saudi Arabia.

Weary Kabul expects the worst

The man who pounded the city for years has no regrets after being sworn in as PM for a second time, writes Gerald Bourke

MINUTES before Gulbuddin Hekmatyar was sworn in for the second time as Afghanistan's prime minister, a senior member of his Hezbe Islami party spoke of its attempts to persuade the Taliban Islamic militia to silence the artillery which had pounded Kabul all day, killing and maiming more than 200 civilians.

"We sent them a message of peace, asking them to agree to a ceasefire," Qarib Saed declared. "We told them the people of Kabul are the people of Afghanistan and the only way to end the war is to negotiate a settlement."

It was another example of the hypocrisy that comes so easily to the leaders of the warring factions, and instils such loathing in the ordinary people they claim to represent.

Four years ago, Islamic factions seized Kabul from an embattled Communist regime. They soon turned their guns on each other and Hezbe was driven out by the combined armies of Burhanuddin Rabbani, the spiritual head of Jamiat Islami, and Rashid Dostum, a powerful ethnic Uzbek from the north.

For the next three years, Hezbe, ultimately backed by General Dostam's once pro-Communist mercenaries, indiscriminately bombarded the capital to try to dislodge Jamiat. They only succeeded in killing tens of thousands of Kabul's residents and reduc-

ing swaths of the city to rubble. During much of this time, Mr Hekmatyar was officially prime minister, but never dared to enter Kabul.

Early last year he fled from his main base, south of Kabul, in fear of a confrontation with the advancing Taliban, and was effectively reduced to the status of a local commander.

Then last month, he struck a deal with President Rabbani. It not only paved the way for his restoration as prime minister, but rescued him from the brink of political and military extinction.

"This man is responsible for the deaths of thousands of people and the destruction of our city," said a surgeon at one of the city's few functioning hospitals, echoing a sentiment widely felt across the capital. "It's absurd."

All the so-called leaders use the slogans of Islam, but their soldiers systematically kill, rape and plunder.

From the safety of a bullet-proof jeep, packed in a convoy of heavily armed bodyguards, the prime minister has witnessed for the first time the devastation wrought by his forces. But there has been no apology.

Excuses, though, are plentiful, and Mr Saed had one ready. "We never fired first, we only retaliated when we came under attack," he claimed with a brazenness typical of the country's power-hungry leaders.

There have been no protests since Mr Hekmatyar's arrival. "Demonstrations would be useless," said the surgeon. "We don't even have the right to life, so we are reduced to worrying about how we can nourish and house our families."

Relief workers say half of Kabul's 1.2 million people do not have adequate food or shelter. The prices of staples continue to soar and beggars are everywhere — many of them women, who have lost their husbands to the rockets which pound the city.

The government is to blame for the misery and for the plunging value of the afghani, the national currency. To oil its military machine, Jamiat flies in plane-loads of freshly-printed afghani banknotes from Russia, and converts them into hard currency on the money markets.

The proceeds have been used to buy vast quantities of weapons from overseas — and the dubious loyalty of Mr Hekmatyar. Many Kabulites are convinced that, bolstered by Hezbe's fighters and firepower, Jamiat will soon launch a big offensive to drive the Taliban from the southern outskirts of the city.

"I have no doubt the war will resume with a vengeance," said Herat Khan, an elderly man queuing outside the city's only orthopaedic centre with a grandson who lost both legs in a rocket explosion. There were murmurs of agreement from others waiting to be fitted with artificial limbs.

In public at least, both the president and prime minister have recently extolled the virtues of peace. They have launched separate charm offensives, ostensibly aimed at wooing rival armies.

The intransigent Taliban militia, who have vowed to rid the country of all other fighting factions and establish a pure Islamic state, refuse to be swayed. "We have had enough of their lies," said one of their commanders during an artillery exchange. "The only solution is to fight."

A mischievous tale has reached the Loafer's ear that one of the Booker judges recently effected some very practical criticism of Melvyn Bragg's Credo: defenestration is the technical term, apparently.

Review page 8

won ballots

10 OBITUARIES

Clay Jones

Guru in the nation's gardens

SEEDSMEN don't actually sell seeds, observed Clay Jones, who has died aged 72. "What they do sell is optimism."

and most called David, he was soon permanently dubbed Clay. As a young man he was offered a job with the D'Oyley Carte opera but his mother who saw the theatre as iniquitous, refused it.



Help line... Clay Jones offers some growing tips

blossomed and flourished under Clay's firm - but never heavy - hand. His voice and his manner were reassuring and he had that rare facility of putting the most nervous questioners at their ease and of handling the most naive and curious of questions without letting the person asking it feel in any way awkward.

Pierre Chany

Chasing the Yellow Jerseys

PIERRE CHANY, who has died aged 73, covered every major continental cycling race since 1947 and wrote about nothing else. His outstanding books on the Tour de France and the Classics have become definitive reference works.

Haute Loire region of France. Chany began his working life as a locksmith while pursuing a good amateur racing career. After active service in the Resistance, he followed the first Tour de France in 1947 as a journalist, a "Tour of Enthusiasm" as he described those early days on the back of a motorbike exposed to the same hazards as the riders - the gruelling heat of the plains, alpine thunderstorms and treacherous untarred mountain passes.

use," he recounted. But he was also a professional who moved with the times - until his recent illness, you could find Pierre in the "salle de presse" after a cycling race, tapping away on a laptop and using the latest technology to file his copy back to the office. On first meeting him some years ago in Morzine, I was struck by his small compact stature. I had imagined him to be a giant after reading his reports in the prestigious French sporting daily L'Equipe.

Letter

Bernard McDonnell writes: I was on the first full-time Fresh Horizons course at the City Literary Institute in 1973 and Enid Hutchinson's work (obituary, June 6) was as effective for men as it was for women. I left school aged 15 in 1960 without any qualifications, or hope, having been let down like thousands of other working-class children, by the pre-comprehensive secondary modern school system.

Ghita Ionescu

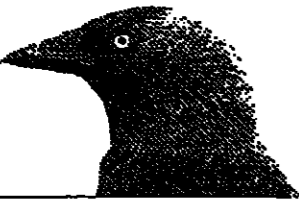
Impresario of academia

GHITA IONESCU, who has died aged 83, was one of a remarkable group of scholars of east European origin who coalesced at the London School of Economics in the 1960s. He rapidly made his mark with such books as Communism in Romania (1965) and The Politics of the East European Communist States (1968).

rest, he joined the Romanian diplomatic service, resigning on the day of King Michael's abdication in 1947. At Manchester in the 1970s he wrote and edited books which identified trends that were to emerge as some of the most important in western politics. There was The New Politics of European Integration (1972), Between Sovereignty and Integration (1974), and Centripetal Politics (1975), and

The European Alternatives (1979). The latter was a massive organisational feat which brought together academic critics of European Commission policies with responses from the relevant officials. This book was a monument to Ionescu's gifts as an academic impresario. His was a thriving university department because he transmitted his commitments and values to PhD students and values to PhD students provoking them to scholarly achievements and forging bonds of loyalty and affection.

Jackdaw



New matter

- H2O is hot water and CO2 is cold water.
● To collect fumes of sulphur, hold a deacon over a flame in a test tube.
● Three kinds of blood vessels are arteries, veins and capillaries.

No shame

CRJ: HOW does a dog fight happen? Squirt: It starts off like this: the owner walks down the street and sees another owner with a dog tied up. He asks, "Do you want to fight?" and the other guy says yes. They may bet money on the side or they may just say, "We're fighting for our souls."

Hang on

SO WHAT'S good about a hangover? Everything (except the headache, maybe) which you think you hate about it. The hangover person is abnormally aware of sights, sounds, (everything seems TOO LOUD) tastes, odours, and textures which normally would go unremarked. That's a good thing, not a bad thing. The hangover eye, for instance, because it is neither obstructed by eye-blinders of our everyday biases, nor deceived by intoxicating hallucinations, is magnetically attracted to seemingly ordinary objects which take on an incredible, luminous significance. Any one who has ever experienced

Hang on

the "stares" when hungover knows exactly what I mean. Although the sudden awareness of the sacred and the mundane is what most religious traditions refer to as Nirvana, or some type of grace, we too often shrug off these moments in our haste to get rid of our hangovers. (I suspect, actually, that the hungover eye which is somehow between the appraising eye of the teetotaler and the foggy eye of the drunkard may be the model for Hinduism's "third eye" of enlightenment.) Thus the moment of the hangover can propel us into a "middle state" of perceptivity quite unlike anything we're ever likely to experience outside the monastery.

Hang on

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Hang on

"For breakfast aspirins/ a glass of milky water. I am always just learning how to live..." (Depression, St Patrick's Day, 1976). I find something heartening in Corbett's notion that when we are neither sober nor drunk we have an opportunity to start afresh. (See Glenn, "The Hermeticism of a Hangover: William Corbett's poetry.") Why do we assume that intoxication leaves us with

Hang on

nothing the next morning but physical pain? Because we've been educated to feel that way. Take a look at the hundreds of books and articles out there on the subject of intoxication that discuss at length the difference between drunk and being sober, yet never explore that avoidable duration of time during which one painfully returns from ecstasy to mundanity. So the next time you wake up with your tongue stuck to an empty bottle of Thunderbird, just take the vials to Diana Ross's disco hit Love Hangover as your mantra: "If there's a cure for this, I don't want it! If there's a remedy, I'll run from it! I've got the sweetest hangover [that] I don't want to get over!" Excerpts from Don't Take the Cure, Take the Pain, alternative advice on the morning after, just one of the many gems available in The Idler.



The Idler: hymn to hangovers

Barry Linehan

Sweet taste of success

BARRY LINEHAN'S television voice-over advertising Mr Kipling's Exciting Good Cakes gave him exposure for 10 years and multiplied sales of those delicacies in one of the most successful TV ad campaigns ever. Yet this accomplished character actor who masked any serious sides to his personality with gregariousness and jokes died of cancer alone in his small flat at the age of 70.

Barry Linehan

German

Barry Linehan, actor, born September 23, 1925; died July 8, 1996

Birthdays

- Sir Anthony Battisbill, chairman, Inland Revenue. Dame Joyance Bracewell QC, High Court judge. 62: Lord Brent, Professor Emeritus of Immunology. St Mary's Medical School, University of London. 71: Mark Cox, tennis commentator. 53: Peter Fraenkel, civil engineer. 61: Pierre Manary, former socialist prime minister of France. 68: Philip Madoc, actor. 62: Major Sir Jeremy Moore, Falklands war commander. 68: Sir Simon Stewart, clinical oncologist. 41: Sir John Ure, diplomat, author, 65.

Test drive

- Faster reactions.
□ Reduced co-ordination.
□ Improved concentration.
□ Colour blindness.
□ Increased confidence.
2. You are approving a right hand bend. You should normally keep well to the:
□ Right to avoid loose gravel at the edge of the road.
□ Left to reduce the sharpness of the bend.
□ Right to enable faster cornering.
□ Left for a better view around the bend.
3. If you are towing a trailer on a motorway, the maximum speed limit is:
□ 40mph; 50mph; 60mph; 70mph.
For those nervous about the new written part of the driving test, these are a sample of the questions you can test yourself on at the BSM website at http://www.bsm.co.uk

Emily Sheffield

Jackdaw wants jewels. E-mail Jackdaw@guardian.co.uk; fax 0171-713 4366; Jackdaw, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER.

France resident? Ian flees in face pilots? A German EDUVAL SHIP... Tony... C... The

July 1996

Air France president's plan flies in face of pilots' strike

French flag carrier braced for battle over cost-cutting drive. **Mark Milner reports**

Air France president Christian Blanc yesterday raised the stakes in his battle to push through a cost-cutting restructuring programme at the state-owned airline, despite a strike which grounded 70 per cent of flights at its Air France Europe subsidiary.

Mr Blanc announced that Air France Europe, formerly Air Inter, would be merged with Air France — a proposal which goes beyond his initial plan, rejected by the AFE pilots last week, to combine the subsidiary's operations with the parent airline's European business.

The restructuring will not, however, mean any addition to the 560 job losses over the next two years which have already been announced.

Mr Blanc is determined to cut costs at Air France Europe, where pilots' are reported to be the highest paid in Europe, with salaries about 15 per cent above those of Air France pilots.

Under the merger proposal, Air France Europe salaries would be brought into line with those paid to Air France employees.

Mr Blanc told staff yesterday that the global airline in-

dustry was undergoing a revolution and important decisions had to be taken.

If it was to survive, Air France Europe faced two choices — to be merged with Air France or to turn itself into a low-cost airline.

The latter choice would mean cutting costs by 30-40 per cent by buying or leasing low-cost aircraft, through rudimentary reservation and distribution systems, low pay for employees and withdrawal from many of the activities of a traditional airline.

"Why is it impossible for a traditional company like ours? For a very simple reason. The social cost of such an adjustment would be insupportable."

Merging Air France and Air France Europe would have the benefits of bringing together domestic, European and international operations. Closer co-operation in those three areas would be a decisive factor in allowing the French flag carrier to compete with "high-performance" US or European carriers such as British Airways, KLM and Lufthansa.

With the European aviation market scheduled to open up



Raising stakes... Christian Blanc enters the meeting with Air France unions at which he announced his revised strategy. PHOTOGRAPH: PHILIPPE WOJAZER

in 1997, "if we don't react, we're going to lock ourselves into a downward spiral leading to bankruptcy". Mr Blanc told a staff council meeting. "That's the situation we face."

Mr Blanc said a merger would remove the "crippling uncertainty brought on by ve-

toing powers of Air France Europe's labour unions and guarantee that Air France as a whole be turned around by the spring of next year."

Last month, Air France reported its first operating profit of Fr13 million (£52 million) in 1995/96, while Air France Europe reported an operating loss of

Fr549 million. Company officials say Air France Europe loses almost Fr100 million a month.

The signs are that Mr Blanc will have a battle on his hands. Previous proposals to cut costs at the group have already provoked industrial action and the latest plan

looks likely to provoke a similar reaction. Serge Boulet, a spokesman for Air France Europe's ground personnel union, warned yesterday: "We're headed for a period of conflict, that's for sure. We aren't weak enough simply to allow ourselves to be gobbled up without a fight."

Tunnel takes on 'early bird' airlines

Keith Harper
Transport Editor

EUROSTAR has started a service to get business people to meetings in Paris before 10 am, in competition with airlines' early bird flights.

The Channel tunnel service has produced a 4.53 am train from London Waterloo, with a departure time of 6.15 am from Ashford. A train from London to Paris direct is to be introduced in the autumn.

Eurostar's commercial director, Ian Brooks, said yesterday: "We can guarantee to get passengers to the centre of Paris for early meetings."

British Airways' first flight to Paris is at 6.40 am, arriving at Orly at 9 am local time, but reaching central Paris can take another hour or more.

Eurostar yesterday confirmed details of a 588 day return fare from Ashford to Paris, Brussels, Lille or Calais, available from July 15 to September 1.

Passenger numbers have increased since April, when the business was transferred to London and Continental Railways from the public sector, from 100,000 to 128,000 a week, of whom 22,000 are business travellers.

Mr Brooks said Eurostar carried 3.4 million passengers last year and hoped to take six million this year. It needs to carry 9½ million to 9 million passengers a year before it can break even, a target it hopes to achieve within two years.

Germany's Adidas secures toehold in French football

ALEX DUVAL SMITH on fluctuating fortunes at Olympique de Marseille

OLYMPIQUE de Marseille yesterday looked set to emerge from three years of penury and disgrace after Adidas, the German sports management company, won its bid to run the French football club for the next five years.

Adidas beat off competition from IMG McCormack, the US sports management company, and Tati, the French textiles group, to take over commercial management of

the club. Placed in receivership after accumulating debts of more than Fr250 million (£31.2 million) under its previous owner, the politician-tycoon Bernard Tapie, the club has been controlled by Marseilles city council for the past year.

It was the city's mayor, Jean-Claude Gaudin, who yesterday announced that the Adidas bid had been successful. It is known to be dependent on a one-off payment of at least Fr30 million to the council, annual investments in the club of at least Fr30 million and the ability to attract Fr120 million in outside capital every year.

The Adidas bid for Eric Cantona's old club — which will return to the French premier division in August after a year's relegation caused by a match-fixing scandal — is thought to be considerably higher than the minimum stipulated by the council.

IMG McCormack, in conjunction with the Nike sports-wear firm, offered Fr100 mil-

lion this year and annual investments of Fr40 million. Tati had pledged, among other things, to open a department store in Marseilles.

Even though former managers of Olympique de Marseille are still in court fighting match-fixing allegations from the Tapie era, the club's glorious track record makes it a plum acquisition.

The club's five French league titles and its victory in the 1983 European Champions Cup are far better remembered than the disgrace brought upon it by allegations linked to Mr Tapie. It is alleged that

for six years the socialist businessman used underhand means — such as match-rigging — to lead the club to footballing glory in an attempt to be elected mayor of the soccer-mad city. He is appealing against a six-month sentence for "bungs" paid to members of a rival team in 1983.

Mr Gaudin, who is likely to sit on the management board of the club, said the deal with Adidas was conditional on a "harmonious relationship between sporting, administrative and political interests".

His deputy, Renaud Muselier, said: "Our plan is to

News in brief

14 oil firms seek Falklands licences

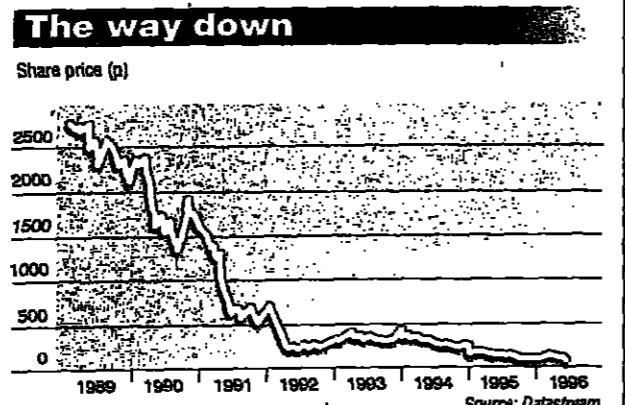
FOURTEEN international oil companies, comprising six groups from ten countries, have applied for licences to explore for oil off the Falkland Islands, it was announced yesterday.

Bidding for licences was launched by the Falkland Islands government last October and closed on Tuesday. Out of 19 tranches on offer, covering a total of more than 44,000 square kilometres, bids have been received for 10 — described as the equivalent of 68 North Sea blocks.

John Martin, oil licensing administrator, said the response had been very positive. Licences should be awarded well before the end of the year to allow interested firms to begin exploration before the next southern summer. Winning bids will have to be given the all-clear by Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind. — *Simon Beavis*

Costain out of debt hole

Outlook/ Troubled group's Malaysian deal best it could get, says Tony May



COSTAIN has looked into the abyss but is heading back from the brink to the arms of a darling Malaysian partner.

The chagrin of UK rivals, who had written the group off, Costain looks set to lose its troubled image thanks to Intria, a construction group capitalised at £457.6 million, taking a 40 per cent stake as part of a £73.5 million rescue.

Intria has underlined its ardour by taking up four out of the group's 10 boardroom seats even though it does not yet know how big a stake it will end up with. The only carrot on offer to old shareholders in a proposed capital reconstruction is the prospect of new business in the booming South Asia market — hailed by Allan Lovell, the chief executive, as "the engine for growth".

Margins are wide enough in that market for a decent profit to be made. Unlike the UK, where the group's £74 million Newbury bypass contract is not expected by the rest of the industry to make a profit, and conditions remain tough.

Even the UK is better than the Middle East where the group admits that contracts taken out in 1986 and earlier do not even cover overheads.

Under the reconstruction scheme launched yesterday, a three-for-one open offer of 155.35 million new 50p ordinary shares will raise £73.6 million. The group's banks are ready to swap debt for equity and could end up with 35 per cent of the group's

shares.

The group's long-suffering shareholders will thus be squeezed into a 25 per cent minority in a company which — assuming pending asset sales go through and raise the expected £60 million — will be capitalised at £104 million. Net debt will be about £77 million and it might have £30 million of cash.

The group's circular sees little hope of a dividend. It says that in 1995 the group turned over £796.8 million of business but ended up with pre-tax and pre-interest losses of £37.8 million — excluding exceptional losses of £56.4 million. It has aggregate write-downs of £143.4 million and a deficit in its profit and loss account of £89.8 million.

The board hopes to put proposals for eliminating the deficit to what promises to be a lively annual general meeting. Shareholders, who have stumped up £180 million in rights issues since 1991, have seen the group's market value slump from more than £1 billion in 1990 to £20.2 million when the shares were suspended last week.

In one of the worst performing sectors of the stock mar-

Training pact unites foes

Unions and TECs seek to bridge skills gap, writes CELIA WESTON

TRAINING and Enterprise Councils yesterday announced an accord with the TUC aimed at boosting workplace training through negotiation with employers.

The Bargaining for Skills initiative, announced at the TECs' annual conference in Birmingham, signals the end of open hostility between the two organisations, which have clashed over the lack of accountability of TECs and the exclusion of trade union representatives when the employer-led TECs were established six years ago.

A good practice guide, produced jointly by the TEC national council and the TUC, will be published in the autumn.

Bargaining for Skills projects, now involving 20 TECs with a target of 40 by next year, are aimed at providing union representatives with the skills to negotiate on training issues and to raise their awareness of National Vocational Qualifications, training needs analyses for businesses, and the Investors in People standard.

John Monks, TUC general secretary, said that, al-

though he would still like to see strengthened union representation on TEC boards and greater diversity among their directors, the accord reflected the changed circumstances of unions' relationships with TECs.

"The main message is that partnership is essential. We clearly need to increase the level of demand for education and training by both employers and employees."

Sir Garry Johnson, chairman of the TEC national council, said: "Employer and employee collaboration in the development of skills is the only way in which UK organisations can meet the global competitiveness challenge of the Government's confidence and support for the 81 TECs and for the network of Business Link one-stop shops providing business support services."

Labour yesterday confirmed in its pre-election manifesto that it would support for TECs. "The existing structure — TECs, NVQs, Investors in People — can remain and be improved."

Earlier, Chris Humphries, national director of policy and strategy for the TECs, criticised the cost of the bureaucratic burdens placed on councils by the Government.

His first estimates suggest that the cost of bureaucracy could be as high as 30 per cent of training costs to meet the contract requirements placed on us by government," he said.

Gillian Shephard, Education and Employment Secretary, announced at the conference a £2 million redesign of the Youth Training Scheme. National Work-based routes to qualifications.

Fewer go out of business

THE number of companies going bust in the first half of 1996 hit a six-year low according to a report published yesterday. Although accountants Deloitte & Touche recorded 128 receiverships and administration orders in June, compared with 115 in May, the six-month total fell for the sixth year in a row. The drop in failures was "relatively consistent across regions and industry sectors", according to Ralph Preece, the partner in charge of corporate recovery. Only Yorkshire and Humberside saw a significant increase in failing firms, up by 25 per cent. — *Sarah Ryle*

Strike threat to Vickers

VICKERS Defence Systems is facing potential disruption to government defence contracts after members of four staff unions voted four to one in favour of a ballot for industrial action. The company is already said to be facing delays to a £730 million order for 386 Challenger 2 tanks because of problems over a computer-aided turret component. Employee protests followed the withdrawal of profit-related pay and the imposition of a 3 per cent pay rise, according to union sources. Union spokesman Guy Hudd said there had been a gradual breakdown of industrial relations with no consultations over changes in conditions of employment. The company, which employs 700 of its 1,500 staff at plants in Leeds and Newcastle, declined to comment. — *Maryn Holsall*

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 1,9325	France 7,7550	Italy 2,335	Singapore 2,15
Austria 14,18	Germany 2,2025	Malta 0,2495	South Africa 6,98
Belgium 47,20	Greece 364,50	Netherlands 2,5850	Spain 163,40
Canada 2,07	Hong Kong 11,77	New Zealand 2,2150	Sweden 10,20
Cyprus 0,7065	India 54,48	Norway 9,98	Switzerland 1,89
Denmark 8,91	Ireland 0,8450	Portugal 238,00	Turkey 123,353
Finland 7,18	Israel 4,98	Saudi Arabia 5,82	USA 1,5250

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